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PUBLIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN JAPAN
PRESENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS

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PUBLIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN JAPAN

— PRESENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS —

by

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I PREFACE

1. Skilled workers in Japan are chiefly fostered under the Vocational Training Law(2) enacted in 1958 to meet an increasing demand for skilled workers and the necessity of improving the skill of workers actually employed in industry. The purpose of the law is to foster skilled workers needed for the manufacturing and other industries by providing vocational training and conducting trade skill test in order to enable workers to enjoy greater security of employment and improved status as well as to contribute to the development of the national economy.

2. The vocational training based on the Vocational Training Law is divided into two categories; "public vocational training" provided to applicants for employment by the State, the Prefectural Government and so on; and "vocational training within industry" provided by employers for their employees.

3. If we compare them with those of European countries, it is characteristic that the public vocational training plays a big role in fostering the skilled workers in our country. As to the vocational training within industry, apprenticeship similar to the one predominant in European countries can be found only in some skill-trades of our domestic industries, while as a general form of vocational training within industry, employers and cooperation of employers provide training systematically to their employees during their working hours and pay ordinary wages to employees.

4. This is because the development of capitalistic method of production in Japan had been behind that of European countries and our system had been established by transplanting high level of skills in those countries for a short period, and therefore, there was no continuation of tradition between the fostering of guild craftsmen before the Meiji Restoration and the fostering of the skilled workers in the present age of capitalistic factory production, and, moreover, owing to the lack of skilled workers, the intention of enterprises to foster their own skilled workers for themselves was very strong.

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(1) The author is the Director of Vocational Training Bureau.

(2) Before the enactment of the Vocational Training Law, the vocational training was provided as the vocational training and supervisory training under the Employment Security Law and the apprenticeship under the Labour Standards Law.

5. We shall introduce our vocational training including the present situation and problems of public vocational training, so as to contribute to the economic development of the developing countries the conditions of which are akin to those in our old days.

II OUTLINE OF PUBLIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING

6. As above mentioned, the skilled workers are chiefly fostered by public vocational training and vocational training within industry. Public vocational training means vocational training provided in the ordinary Vocational Training Centre, General Vocational Training Centre, Central Vocational Training Centre and Vocational Training Centre for Physically Handicapped Persons. The establishment and the activity of each category of vocational training centre are as follows.

Ordinary Vocational Training Centre

7. The ordinary Vocational Training Centre provides applicants for employment with vocational training for basic skills and may conduct the following business as far as no hindrance is placed to the business afore-mentioned; providing employed workers with vocational training for basic skills, conducting business concerning assistance with respect to vocational training within industry. The centre is established and operated by the Prefectural Government and a half of the expenses necessary for the centre are borne by the State, as provided for by the Cabinet Order.

General Vocational Training Centre

8. The General Vocational Training Centre provides employed workers and applicants for employment with vocational training for special skills and conduct business concerning assistance with respect to vocational training within industry. The centre is established and operated by the Employment Promotion Projects Corporation(3) as welfare facilities of the Unemployment Insurance. The expenses necessary for the centre are paid out of the receipts of interest drawn from the reserve fund of the Unemployment Insurance Account.

Central Vocational Training Centre

9. The Central Vocational Training Centre conducts research and study of vocational training. The centre is established and operated by the Employment Promotion Projects Corporation as welfare facilities of the Unemployment Insurance. The necessary expenses are paid out of the receipts of interest drawn from the reserve fund of the Unemployment Insurance Account.

Vocational Training Centre for Physically Handicapped Persons

10. The Vocational Training Centre for Physically Handicapped Persons provides vocational training to physically handicapped persons who find it difficult to receive vocational training in the ordinary Vocational Training Centre, General Vocational Training Centre or Central Vocational Training Centre. The centre is established by the State and the Prefectural Government. The State bears a half of the expenses necessary for the Vocational Training Centre for Physically Handicapped Persons established by the Prefectural Government.

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(3) The Employment Promotion Projects Corporation is a special juridical person which has been established for the purpose of promoting the employment of workers.

Vocational Training Conducted by a City, Town, Village, etc.

11. Besides the foregoing, in case vocational training is provided, subject to the approval by the Minister of Labour, by a city, town or village, a public utility association, a trade union which is a juridical person or any other juridical person not having for its object the acquisition of gain, such training will be regarded as public vocational training.

12. Public vocational training is to be conducted in conformity with the standards laid down by the Ordinance of the Ministry of Labour, concerning the curriculum, training period, equipment and other matters, and the vocational training instructor in the public vocational training except training of vocational training instructors must be a person who has been granted the license from the Minister of Labour.

13. As to the training trades of the public vocational training the standards of which are prescribed for by the Ministry of Labour Ordinance, the training trades for basic skills amount to 84 and the trades for special skills to 31. By the Ordinance, training period, subjects of curriculum, training hours and equipments necessary for training (by trade), and number of trainees of a unit, number of training instructors and examination (for all trades) are prescribed.

Training Period

14. The training period for basic skills is one year or less (training hours: 1,800, 900 or 450 hours), and the training period for special skills is 2 years (training hours: 3,600 hours).

Curriculum

15. The subject of curriculum is divided into theory and practice. The former consists of general subject and special subject and the latter consists of basic practice and applied practice. General subjects are selected from among social study, gymnastics, mathematics, physics, chemistry, foreign language, Japanese and business administration so that a trainee may develop himself and learn the basis of the special subject. Special subjects are prescribed by trade so that a trainee may get the knowledge necessary for practice and develop the thinking power for the work. Practice is carried out from basic practice to applied systematically by steps.

Equipment

16. Equipment necessary for training is prescribed by training trade, under the headings of buildings and other construction, machinery and other equipments.

Number of Trainees of a Unit

17. The number of trainees of a unit is fixed from 30 to 50 so that training may be effectively conducted.

Number of Vocational Training Instructors

18. In principle, three training instructors are necessary for every 30 trainees, and four instructors for every 50 trainees. The number can be increased or decreased in accordance with the number of trainees, degree of danger involved in the training and difficulty of instruction.

Examination

19. Examination must be given once or more time by the subject of curriculum.

20. The vocational training instructors of the public vocational training must be those who have obtained a license from the Minister of Labour. The license will be granted to those who passed the examination for vocational training instructors, those who passed the first grade trade-skill test and subsequently completed the prescribed course of training, those who completed a course of the Central Vocational Training Centre (training period is four years), those who graduated from a college or those who have equivalent or better qualification.

21. With respect to the relief measures, public vocational training for basic skills given to applicants for employment and physically handicapped persons is free of charge and an allowance is paid to the handicapped.

22. Furthermore, the duration of benefit of the Unemployment Insurance is extended to a maximum of one year beyond the normal duration, if a trainee receiving unemployment benefits is undergoing public vocational training. thus making it easy to receive vocational training for the unemployed. Vocational Training Allowance and Separation Allowance are paid to trainees who are undergoing public vocational training by the instruction of the Public Employment Security Office and they are provided accommodation by the Employment Promotion Projects Corporation.

III SITUATION OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

23. The situation of the public vocational training in 1962 is as follows.

Number of Facilities and Trainees

24. While the ordinary Vocational Training Centre is established and operated by the Prefectural Government, the General Vocational Training Centre and the Central Vocational Training Centre are established and operated by the Employment Promotion Projects Corporation and the Vocational Training Centre for the Physically Handicapped by the State and the Prefectural Government. The basic program concerning the provision of vocational training can be formulated by the Minister of Labour. In formulating the above program, consideration must be given so that skilled workers may be fostered properly in the light of the condition of employment and unemployment as well as the development in the manufacturing and other industries. Taking into account the lack of skilled workers, 2 ordinary Vocational Training Centres and 2 General Vocational Training Centres were newly built in 1962. As a whole 63,660 persons are being trained in 348 centres. The State budget necessary for the training amounts to 3,459,249,000 yen. The activities of the vocational training centres are as shown in the following table.

TABLE I

Type of training Centre	No. of facilities	No. of training trade	No. of trainees per term	No. of trainees yearly total	State budget
	centres		person		in thousand yen
Ordinary V.T.C.	295	944	33,565	44,880	1,093,997
G.V.T.C.	44	365	15,040	17,380	2,011,785
C.V.T.C.	1	11	190	220	163,446
V.T.C.for the Physically Handicapped	8	62	1,180	1,180	190,021
Total	348	1,382	49,975	63,660	3,459,249

25. Approved Vocational Training regarded as public vocational training is being given as shown in the following table for 1962.

TABLE II

The body which has established approved V.T.	No. of facilities	No. of training trade	No. of trainees
	centres		
City	3	7	1,110
Trade Union	1	2	180
Total	4	9	1,290

Training Trade

26. The vocational training of 84 training trades is being given in the ordinary Vocational Training Centres. The trades are classified into 4 kinds; industrial trades (mechanic, finisher, automotive mechanic, etc.), handicraft trades (wood worker, furnisher, carpenter, etc.), trades for women (dressmaker, typist, etc.) and trades of local industry (mason, pottery-worker). The trades for which many trainees are being trained are as follows; mechanic, welder, lineman (light and power), electric machine and instrument repairman, dressmaker, automotive mechanic, block layer, carpenter, wood worker, accountant, etc.

27. The number of training trades of General Vocational Training Centres are 34 and they are related to the secondary industries. The prevalent trades are as follows; mechanic, sheet metal worker, welder, lineman (light and power), electric machine and instrument repairman, automotive mechanic, etc.

28. As the adaptable trades to the physically handicapped persons, the training of watch repairman, radio and television repairman, dressmaker, mechanical draftman, barber, etc. are conducted in the Vocational Training Centre for Physically Handicapped Persons.

The Situation of Application and Employment

29. The situation of the application, entrance, completion and employment in the public vocational training in 1960 was as shown in the following table.

TABLE III

Type of V.T.C.	Ratio of applications (1)	Ratio of entrance (2)	Ratio of completion (3)	Ratio of employment (4)
	%	%	%	%
Ordinary V.T.C.	199	99	92	97
G.V.T.C. basic skills(5)	221	99	90	96
G.V.T.C. special skills	377	106	-	-
V.T.C. for the physically handicapped	132	95	91	94
C.V.T.C.	not operated			

Notes (1) Ratio of application = $\frac{\text{Number of applicants}}{\text{fixed number}} \times 100$

(2) Ratio of entrance = $\frac{\text{No. of admitted persons}}{\text{fixed number}} \times 100$

(3) Ratio of completion = $\frac{\text{No. of those who completed}}{\text{Number of trainees}} \times 100$

(4) Ratio of employment = $\frac{\text{Number of the employed}}{\text{No. of those who completed}} \times 100$

(5) The course of vocational training for basic skills commissioned by the Prefectural Government.

IV THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING

30. As the public vocational training is expanding its scale year by year, the number of those who complete the course of the public vocational training is also increasing every year.

31. As to the employment situation of those who completed the ordinary Vocational Training Centre, a pivot of the public vocational training in the fiscal 1958, 94.2% of those who completed the course found work, of whom 91.7% were employed by others. 62.6% of the employed ex-trainees found their employment in the small-scale undertakings employing 99 workers or less and only 19.7% of the employed ex-trainees were working in the undertakings with 500 workers or more.

32. With respect to the kinds of industry, 46.8% of the employed ex-trainees found their employment in manufacturing and 15.1% in Construction. Manufacturing and construction are the leading industries for the growth of the national economy. Further, as it is difficult for small-scale enterprises to train necessary skilled workers for themselves, it is no exaggeration to say that the public vocational training cooperating with

Other considerations

38. If an IPS is carried out upon request of the management of a firm it is advisable to charge a fee, preferably a lump sum; this could be a nominal one if the investigating organization is subsidized. If the enterprise has to pay for the service rendered co-operation of the firm might be obtained more fully. Complete co-operation on all levels is a conditio sine qua non.

39. Another consideration is the complete neutrality of the investigating body towards all other organizations or advisers who might be recommended for rendering expert assistance. If the surveying organization itself is also prepared to render further assistance, other possibilities for obtaining expert advice will also have to be mentioned, or it will have to be stipulated beforehand that the IPS has to be considered as a preliminary study for a subsequent consultancy assignment.

INTEGRATED PLANT SURVEY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

40. It is recommended to have IPS applied by extension services in order to obtain preliminary studies, by industrial banks for facilitating their evaluation of loan applications etc. In this way the difficulty may be overcome that no requests are received from managers of small industries on account of their resistance to any outside assistance.

41. The experience of the Research Institute for Management Science (RVB) in the Netherlands has shown that an IPS was requested inter alia for one or more of the following reasons:

- management was convinced of having a well organized plant and wanted to have this checked;
- management wanted an outside report in order to strengthen its position toward its board or bankers;
- management felt that there existed in the plant certain problems without being able to define them accurately.

42. Before starting an IPS it is necessary to provide the investigating organization with a complete documentation regarding available expert assistance (consultancy, research, information, training) in the respective area. Eventually, if such documentation does not exist, a survey has to be undertaken in order to gather all facts about activities, limitations, costs, duration of assistance etc. of the organizations or bodies rendering such assistance.

43. IPS investigators have to be trained; such investigators need:

- good theoretical knowledge of the different management techniques in the various fields of management and familiarity with their application as well as their limitations;
- sufficient practical experience in applying such knowledge in industrial enterprises;
- good understanding of managerial problems in industry;
- not a purely scientific but above all a practical approach:
- a confidence-inspiring personality.

44. As IPS covers the industrial enterprise as a whole, it might be advisable - if circumstances permit - to have it carried out by a team of two investigators: production and personnel sectors by an industrial engineer, marketing and financing by an industrial economist.

45. It is recommended that the investigator has acquired previous experience in management consultancy work. Before starting his activities as investigator it is advisable to have such an official carry out some surveys under the guidance and supervision of an experienced investigator. Good training may also be achieved by having the trainee-investigator follow up himself one or more of the surveys.

46. In general it will not be a practical proposition to establish a special organization occupying itself exclusively with IPS. Such surveys can

vocational training within industry contributes to the fostering of skilled workers who are the support and driving force of the economic development of our country.

33. With the progress of technological innovation, the shortage of skilled workers is becoming more acute a problem. According to the survey conducted in 1962, the shortage of skilled workers amounts to about 1,260,000 persons. On the other hand, there are many who need to undergo vocational training for employment, for instance, persons who have been displaced from the coal mining and who have left the agriculture, etc. In providing a greater security of employment by giving skills to them, the role to be played by the public vocational training is very significant.

34. At present, about 27% of the trainees of public vocational training in the ordinary Vocational Training Centres and General Vocational Training Centres are unemployed persons and those who have left the agriculture, etc. Especially, for those who have been displaced from the coal mining and U.S.Army Base, special measures are being taken with respect to the training.

35. As mentioned above, the duration of benefit of the Unemployment Insurance is extended to a maximum of one year beyond the normal duration, if a trainee receiving unemployment benefits is undergoing public vocational training. Vocational training allowance is given to those who are not entitled to the unemployment benefit and other benefits are allowed to the trainees. The public vocational training has contributed to the economic development of our country by its two functions; to foster and secure skilled workers necessary to the small- and medium-scale enterprises, for which it is difficult to foster skilled workers for themselves, by cooperating with vocational training within industry, and to assure the security of employment and promote the mobility of labour by endowing skills to unemployed persons who lost their jobs on account of the technological innovation or the change of industrial structure.

V THE PROBLEMS OF PUBLIC VOCATIONAL TRAINING

36. In order to solve the problem of shortage of the skilled workers at present and in response to an increasing demand for skilled workers following the economic growth in the future, the vocational training must be expanded and strengthened.

37. For this purpose, a Long-term Program of Vocational Training was formulated in 1960. According to this program, the number of trainees of the public vocational training in 1970 will be 137,000 (2.4 times the number of 1965). In the ocurse of the execution of this program, the following problems will come into existence.

Operational

A. Securing of Capable Vocational Instructors and Raising of Their Quality

38. The result of vocational training depends upon the ability and quality of training instructors. With the shortage of engineers, it will be difficult to secure the necessary and capable vocational instructors of the public vocational training. Since the training instructors must be able in theory and practice, the difficulties will be doubled. Even if the facilities for

best be handled by organizations destined to promote efficiency in other ways too, for instance providing training possibilities as well as documentation and information services.

47. The number of surveys to be handled by one investigator or by a team will depend largely on experience, geographical distribution of enterprises as well as their size, routine acquired by numerous surveys in certain branches of industry and the facilities at the disposal of investigators.

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training of training instructors (for example, the Central Vocational Training Centre) should be established, it would be difficult to estimate the number to become training instructors.

B. Setting of Reasonable Standards of Training

39. In order to keep abreast of continuous progress of production techniques, it is absolutely necessary to decide clearly the range of the skills to be trained and set the reasonable standards of training.

C. Augmentation of Training Facilities and Equipment and Training Materials Necessary to Carry Out Vocational Training Effectively

40. It is necessary for carrying out vocational training effectively to augment the training facilities and equipment and training materials. But it will be difficult to materialize such plans with limited budget.

Institutional

A. Relationship between the Public Vocational Training and the School Education

41. Vocational training based on the Vocational Training Law must be provided under the close coordination with school education under the School Education Law, avoiding the overlapping with the school education. However, the certification of completing the course of school is not allowed to those who complete the course of the public vocational training.

42. In order to extend the public vocational training to young persons, it is necessary to cooperate with school education authority or alternatively to establish a system with a view to elevating the social status of skilled workers. At present, it is now being examined how to locate the vocational training under the Vocational Training Law and other training in the system of senior secondary education.

B. Means of Assisting the Trainees in their Maintenance during the Training Period

43. With the expansion of the vocational training for the unemployed -- that is one of the important functions of the public vocational training -- consideration must be taken into the need of providing better means of assisting the trainees in their maintenance during the training period, especially for the middle-aged trainees who must support their families.